

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



Huntingdon Primary School

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“Cash for Trash” Helps Pay Electric Bills

The Member

Huntingdon Primary School, with grades K-3, has been involved in recycling cans and cardboard for a number of years. In spring 2004, the school's recycling program expanded and took on a new focus with the development of the Wiser Miser Energy Team. The 2005-06 Wiser Miser Team consists of 8 industrious third grade students, who lead their school of 380 students and 40 faculty and staff in environmental stewardship and energy education activities. It is the goal of the school to encourage students to make good choices, be kind, be responsible, be respectful, and be their best. Energy education, conservation, and environmental awareness are promoted in our school and our community through demonstrations and service learning activities. Students and the community are given the opportunity to learn to become Wiser Misers of our earth's natural resources, while helping others along the way. Ramona Nelson at the Tennessee Energy Education Network (TEEN) provides assistance with energy education in West Tennessee.

The Story

With the opening of a new recycling center in our small town, the opportunity to expand our school's recycling program was wide open. We could now earn money for our recycling efforts, while keeping trash out of the landfill. With the rise of electricity rates this fall and the high cost of energy, our goal was to raise funds from recycling to help needy families through the Carroll County Electric Company's program, PROJECT HELP. We set a goal of one ton of paper for each of the four grade levels to be collected during the month of November. This would divert 4 tons of paper from the landfill.

The Success

To raise a large amount of money for our project, we enlisted the help of others in our school and community. During the month of November, we celebrated America Recycles Day with a paper-recycling contest at our school. Each grade level was challenged to bring in a ton of paper. The students, teachers, and their families enlisted the help of local businesses, family members, and high school students to help them reach their goal. The paper was collected and transported to Kadkon and Brown Recycling Center by Energy Team sponsor,

Connie Bond and her helpful husband, Jay. Energy Team members were responsible for loading the papers into the truck, which hauled the paper from the Primary School to the recycling center. Each grade level surpassed their goal, and the project brought in 6 tons of paper products for recycling. We received a check for \$300.00 and presented it to the PROJECT HELP board.

As a result of the amount of money raised and the positive support of the students and community, PROJECT HELP requested that we continue our paper-recycling program. The Energy Team attended a board meeting with PROJECT HELP members, who suggested that we solicit the participation of area churches to have a congregational paper-recycling program. Letters were sent to area churches requesting their participation in the “Cash for Trash” paper drive. The response of the churches was great, and during the months of January through March of 2006, we collected about 16,792 pounds of paper to be recycled for PROJECT HELP. We earned \$410.71 to help needy families pay their electric bill. We continued to collect paper at our school daily and with our local churches. Connie Bond, Energy Team sponsor, takes the paper from the Primary School to Kadkon and Brown Recycling Center, while volunteer church members take their papers directly to the recycling center.

Energy Team members have also been collecting papers since September 2005 from their family and friends to help them earn money to go to Washington D.C. this summer to receive a special energy education award. To date, our Energy Team and school have recycled over 47,530 pounds of paper and earned \$1,288.25!

The Pollution Prevented

We have saved 47,530 pounds of paper waste from entering the landfill. For each ton of paper we recycled (23.8 tons), we saved approximately 17 trees (a total of 405 trees). Manufacturing paper with recycled fibers uses less energy, water, and chemicals than virgin fibers. We are also proud of the fact that our students and community are caring and want to help others who are less fortunate in our area by participating in the “Cash for Trash” recycling project.

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